



MEMORANDUM

TO: Steve Shiver
County Manager

DATE: May 17, 2002

FROM: *Corinne Brody*
Corinne Brody, Director
Office of Performance Improvement

SUBJECT: Impact of the Membership Assistance
Program (MAP) on Bus Operator
Absenteeism at Miami-Dade Transit

I am pleased to present the final report for the review of the Membership Assistance Program's (MAP) impact on bus operator absenteeism. As you are aware, MAP is a peer-to-peer assistance program established as part of the 1998 five-part absenteeism reduction program launched jointly by Miami-Dade Transit (MDT) and the Transport Workers Union (TWU). However, on July 30, 2001, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) recommended termination of MAP because the costs of the program did not appear to be justified and the program appeared to be a duplication of the Positive Attendance Control and Evaluation (PACE) program. Consequently, OPI was requested to review the effectiveness of MAP in reducing absenteeism.

Since the implementation of the absenteeism reduction program and with increased vigilance in applying the rules of PACE, the rate of bus operator absenteeism fell 4.04 percentage points from 20.87% in FY97-98 to 16.83% in FY00-01. The most significant reduction (3.0 percentage points) occurred in FY98-99, immediately after the implementation of the program. Minimal declines of 0.24 percentage points occurred in FY99-00 and 0.73 in FY00-01.

Our results show that while it cannot be unequivocally concluded that MAP had significant impacts on absenteeism rates, the data does not support outright rejection of MAP as a factor that can possibly impact absenteeism reduction. However, our research into other peer programs suggests that primarily focusing MAP on achieving absenteeism reduction may be limiting its effectiveness as a peer program and its benefits to MDT. Typical peer programs are targeted to overall employee wellness, safety, diversity and support. A secondary benefit of these programs is absenteeism reduction and consequently, success is not measured solely by their ability to reduce absenteeism.

Additionally, we found MAP reporting and accounting for program activities below standard and recommend improvements with MDT oversight. Other peer programs researched by OPI have structured work programs, formal reporting and data logging requirements, more formal training programs and interaction with entity-wide employee assistance programs. OPI also found that although the ratio of representatives to employees varies from approximately 1:1,700 to 1:4,500, with three representatives and almost 1,135 full and part time bus operators, MAP has a ratio closer to 1:380.

Attachments

- c. George Burgess, Assistant County Manager
Bill Johnson, Assistant County Manager
Danny Alvarez, Director, Miami-Dade Transit
J. W. Johnson, President, Transport Workers Union, Local 291

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY
OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT**

MIAMI-DADE TRANSIT AGENCY

**IMPACT OF THE MEMBER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (MAP)
ON BUS OPERATOR ABSENTEEISM
(1997-2001)**

April 2002

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I. EXECUTVE SUMMARY

The Membership Assistance Program (MAP) is a peer-to-peer assistance program that was formally established under a 1998 absenteeism reduction agreement between Miami-Dade Transit (MDT) and the Transport Workers Union (TWU). At the inception of the program in August 1998, MDT sponsored three MAP representatives, and in July 1999, authorized one additional part-time and two full-time operators to join the program as MAP representatives. MDT reported that this was done in recognition of the impact of the program on bus operator absenteeism. On July 30, 2001, after reviewing the program, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) recommended termination of MAP because the costs of the program did not appear to be justified. Additionally, the OIG reported that MAP appeared to be a duplication of the Positive Attendance Control and Evaluation (PACE) program established in 1985 to combat high absenteeism. Consequently, the County Manager reduced the number of county-sponsored MAP representatives to one and requested OPI review the effectiveness of the MAP in reducing absenteeism. The Transport Workers Union (TWU) continued to sponsor two additional representatives in order to maintain three MAP representatives in the program.

Bus operator absenteeism has historically been a major priority for MDT and in 1985 the Department instituted the PACE program to ensure uniform application of discipline for bus operators who were frequently absent from work. However, absenteeism remained high and on August 5, 1998, in addition to PACE, MDT and the TWU agreed to the five-part absenteeism reduction program. The agreement included the following provisions:

1. Conduct bus operator physical examinations every two years instead of annually.
2. "Miss-outs" (failure to report or to relieve an operator within the specified time) would no longer result in automatic suspension.
3. Extended deadline from 10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for an operator to notify MDT that he/she is ready to return to work after an absence due to illness.
4. Allow operators to forfeit annual/holiday leave in lieu of suspensions except where violations relate to drug and alcohol abuse.
5. Establish the MAP. Initially three TWU employees were released from bus operator duties to serve as MAP representatives.

Since the implementation of these initiatives and with increased vigilance in applying the rules of PACE, the rate of bus operator absenteeism fell 4.04 percentage points from 20.87% in FY97-98 to 16.83% in FY00-01. The most significant reduction (3.0 percentage points) occurred in FY98-99, immediately after the implementation of the program. Minimal decline of 0.24 percentage point occurred in FY99-00 and 0.73 in FY00-01. Peak daily absenteeism also declined from 34% in FY97-98 to 25% in late FY00. During FY01, daily absenteeism rates ranged from 10% to 25%.

MAP activity data provided by the TWU for three MAP representatives (one from each bus depot), shows that together the three representatives contacted an average of nine bus operators daily. OPI found no written defined roles or job descriptions for MAP representatives, however, in interviews with the TWU, OPI determined that MAP representatives primarily council bus operators with a high number of absences and who are at risk of entering the PCACE program. A total of 82% of all client contacts were initiated from reviewing the daily absenteeism report prepared by MDT and the primary reasons for client contacts include tardiness, failure to relieve other drivers and higher than desired absenteeism that could cause the operator to enter PACE. The remaining 18%

of client contacts were to assist employees with alcohol, drug abuse, gambling, illness or stress related problems. From the data received, it was not possible to determine the outcomes of these client contacts or the interrelationships of the various contacts to absenteeism reduction.

The MAP workload and program outcome data are not accurately tracked and reported, consequently it was not possible to establish direct causal relationships between MAP activities and absenteeism reduction. As a result, OPI attempted to gauge the effectiveness of the MAP program by evaluating the overall change in each absenteeism category. Additionally, MAP is limited in its ability to significantly reduce absenteeism because the broad operational and systemic issues surrounding bus operator absenteeism are outside of the control of the program. These include, rider behavior and hostility directed to operators, length of runs, lack of rest facilities at turn-around points and workplace rules favoring seniority. MAP also has an influence but no direct control over vacations, banked holidays, administrative leave and other factors controlled by MDT and the County. The table below summarizes the major factors that OPI found to have influenced absenteeism reduction.

Major Factors Impacting Absenteeism Reduction 1997-2001		
Factor	Net Reduction	Comments
On The Job Injuries	1.45	Primarily due to increased management oversight and monitoring
Banked Holidays, Scheduled And Unscheduled Vacations.	1.03	Primarily due to decreases in unscheduled vacation requests
Change In Frequency Of Employee Physicals*	0.76	Total reflects the maximum possible impact
Vacation In Lieu Of Suspensions*	<0.02	This option was rarely used during the period
Miscellaneous Activities combined	<u>0.78</u>	
Total	<u>4.04</u>	
Important Initiatives for Which the Impact on Absenteeism Reduction could not be Directly Quantified		
Eliminate Automatic Suspensions for Miss-Outs*	Data not available as the policy on miss-outs impacts other absenteeism reduction initiatives	
Later Call-in to Clear Sick List*	Data not available to estimate the effect of this policy	
Member Assistance Program*	No data available to compute the overall impact. An average of nine bus operators are contacted daily for various reasons	
PACE Program	For the three years prior to FY97-98, total PACE actions was 870. Total actions increased to 1344 over the ensuing three years. In FY-01, there were 821 PACE actions	

Notes: * This initiative was included in the August 1998 Absenteeism Reduction Agreement.

Absenteeism reduction resulted from a combination of management actions, the PACE program and some initiatives from the August 1998 5-part absenteeism reduction agreement. The majority of the reduction in absenteeism was the result of a decrease in absences caused by on-the-job

injuries and reductions in requests for scheduled and unscheduled annual leave and banked holidays. Additionally, the change in policy concerning bus operator physicals contributed to the decline absenteeism. MDT management has significantly more impact than MAP in these categories.

While it cannot be unequivocally concluded that MAP and even PACE, have significant impacts on absenteeism rates, the data does not support rejecting MAP as a factor impacting absenteeism reduction. Additionally, MDT has implemented some conflicting workplace policies that may improve attendance in one area while encouraging absences in others; therefore, it was not possible to accurately isolate the impact of some specific program elements on bus operator absenteeism. For example, relaxing the discipline for miss-outs was aimed at minimizing absences due to automatic suspensions; however, it could result in an increase in absences due to miss-outs.

OPI researched other peer-to-peer programs and concluded that primarily focusing MAP on achieving absenteeism reduction may be limiting its effectiveness as a peer program and its benefits to MDT. Typical peer programs are targeted to overall employee wellness, safety, diversity and support. A secondary benefit of these programs is absenteeism reduction and consequently, success of such programs is not measured solely by their ability to reduce absenteeism. Additionally, MAP reporting and accounting for program activities is below standard and should be improved with MDT oversight. Other peer programs researched by OPI have structured work programs and formal reporting/data logging requirements, more formal training and certification programs and, interaction with entity-wide employee assistance programs. OPI also found that although the ratio of representatives to employees in other peer programs varies from approximately 1:1,700 to 1:4,500, with three representatives and almost 1,135 full and part time bus operators, MAP has a ratio closer to 1:380. A suggested ratio in high stress and safety sensitive industries is one paid representative for every 2,500 employees. However, in determining the appropriate ratio for MDT, the realities of ethnic, gender, language and culture in the MDT community have to be considered.

II. BACKGROUND AND SCOPE

The reduction in bus operator absenteeism has historically been a major priority for MDT. In 1985, MDT launched the Positive Attendance Control and Evaluation (PACE) program to ensure uniform application of discipline for bus operators who are frequently absent from work. PACE defines an incident as time taken for sick leave or leave without pay for a continuous period of time ranging from four hours to 50 days. Generally, bus operators with 12 separate absenteeism incidents over the most recent 12 months automatically enter this progressive discipline program. Additionally, operators with as little as eight incidents, but who have no available sick leave, may also be placed in the PACE program. Progressive disciplinary steps in the PACE program include Informal Counseling, Formal Counseling, Written Reprimand, 3-Day Suspension, 7-Day Suspension, 20-Day Suspension, and Termination. Each additional incident above 12 within the last 12 months triggers a further step in the progressive discipline schedule. Supervisors are allowed to waive the otherwise automatic disciplinary action if they determine there are warranted extenuating circumstances.

Despite PACE, absenteeism at MDT remained high through most of the 1990s. To address the continuing problem, on August 5, 1998 the Department and the TWU signed a Letter of Understanding (Appendix A) that included five provisions for combating bus operator absenteeism. The five primary initiatives were:

1. Bus operator physical examinations were to be given every two years instead of annually.
2. "Miss-outs" (a failure to report or to relieve and operator within a specified time) would no longer result in suspensions. Instead, where disciplinary action was required, a written reprimand would be issued and, where appropriate, progressive discipline would lead to dismissal.
3. The deadline for an operator to notify MDT that he/she is ready to return to work after an absence due to illness was extended from 10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
4. Operators were given the option to forfeit annual or holiday leave in lieu of serving suspensions, except in cases where the violation is related to drug and alcohol abuse.
5. MDT authorized the release of three TWU employees (appointed by the Union) to serve as MAP representatives. This would continue as long as targeted absenteeism rates were met and maintained. However, it was agreed that one MAP representative would remain if targets were not met.

Under this arrangement, the target absenteeism rate was set at 16% and the Union President would assist with coordinating the absenteeism reduction program. Also, as stated in an August 12, 1998 memorandum from the MDT Director to the County Manager (Appendix B), the efforts of the 5-part absenteeism agreement were to be monitored and reported to the County Manager on a monthly basis. In administering the MAP, TWU selected three senior bus operators to function as full-time program representatives, assisting fellow employees in improving their attendance. Contrary to the process proposed in the August 12, 1998 memorandum to the County Manager, no reporting format was established and MAP has not reported on its absenteeism reduction efforts. However, when the initiatives under the 5-part agreement were implemented in August 1998, bus

operator absenteeism averaged 20.87% and by the end of FY00-01 the average daily absenteeism rate had fallen to 16.83%, a difference of 4.04 percentage points.

In the July 30, 2001 Audit Report, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) recommended termination of the MAP because the costs of the program did not appear to be justified. Additionally, the OIG's report stated that MAP appeared to be a duplication of the PACE program. Consequently, the County Manager reduced the number of MAP representatives to one -- the minimum allowed under the MDT-TWU Agreement -- and requested that OPI review the effectiveness of the MAP in reducing absenteeism.

Since MAP is one of many variables potentially impacting bus operator absenteeism, OPI attempted to establish a causal relationship between MAP program activities and the decline in absenteeism at MDT. OPI held meetings with MDT staff, the TWU President and one MAP representative to determine how the program was administered and to gather performance data. Additionally, OPI researched peer assistance programs in other agencies and private businesses and assessed the programs' mission, size, and successful practices for comparison with MDT's MAP. However, OPI did not attempt to evaluate program costs or payment amounts, or to quantify savings.

III. FINDINGS

Bus Operator Scheduling

On a daily basis, MDT must ensure that a sufficient number of bus operators are available to complete the required pieces of work. A piece of work is any specific work assignment that proceeds from start to finish with no intervening changes. A bus operator's workday may consist of one or two pieces of work, with or without intervening time between pieces. Pieces of work are sometimes referred to as runs, or may represent a portion of a run as determined by the dispatcher. MDT selects operators from three categories to fill service runs:

- **Regular Board** – These are bus operators who have one or two regularly scheduled pieces of work each day. Regular Board members choose their pieces of work at MDT's semi-annual "line-ups".
- **Extra Board** – Comprises an additional pool of bus operators used to cover Regular Board absences (regardless of the reason for the operator's failure to report for work). Currently, MDT assumes an 18% absenteeism rate among regular board operators. Extra Board operators are guaranteed payment for a 40-hour workweek. As per union rules, choices are made strictly in order of seniority for both Regular and Extra Board runs.
- **Extra List** – On the days when the number of Regular Board and Extra Board operators is not sufficient to cover all the required pieces of work, MDT uses bus operators who have volunteered to work overtime. These operators comprise the Extra List.

An appropriately sized Extra Board is critical for MDT to mitigate the negative impact of absenteeism on service delivery. Based on historical patterns, MDT budgets for an overall absenteeism rate of 18% among both the Regular Board and the Extra Board operators. However,

experienced dispatchers will vary the number of Extra Board operators based on day of the week and other seasonal circumstances. Typically, MDT schedules enough Extra Board operators each day to cover 18% of the Regular Board operators, plus additional operators to cover the expected 18% absenteeism rate among the Extra Board. Consequently, the resultant expected absenteeism rate that must be planned for is 21.24% of the Regular Board operators scheduled to work. For example, if MDT requires 100 Regular Board Operators to service the day's runs, the Department will budget at least 122 operators, of which 22 will be from the Extra Board. Where absenteeism exceeds the number of scheduled operators, (Regular and Extra Boards), MDT schedules operators from the Extra list to fill in.

MDT reports daily absenteeism as the total number of operators that are absent with respect to the total number of operators scheduled to work from the Regular and Extra Boards. Unlike typical absenteeism reports, MDT includes scheduled or preplanned absences (such as vacation, jury duty, educational leave and suspensions) along with unscheduled absences (such as sick leave and no-shows) in the absenteeism totals. This method of tracking absenteeism is typical in the transit industry, as it serves scheduling and dispatching needs: every run has to be serviced on time regardless of the reasons for operator unavailability. Table 1 provides an example of how MDT computes daily absenteeism rate.

Table 1 Absenteeism Rate Calculation	
Absenteeism Rate = $\frac{\text{Number of Scheduled and Unscheduled Absences}}{\text{Number of Scheduled Operators (Regular and Extra Board)}}$	
Sample Date from MDT logs: 03/17/98	
Total Regular and Extra Board Operators Scheduled	899
Number of Scheduled Operators absent	
Vacations, Banked and Annual Leave	24
Sick Leave, Superintendent's List – Sick	72
On the Job Injury (OJI)	19
Other:	<u>22</u>
Total Absences	<u>137</u>
Absenteeism rate (%)	15.24
Source – MDT	

MDT/TWU Membership Assistance Program (MAP)

The MAP is a peer-to-peer assistance program in which bus operators selected by TWU act as peer representatives. At the formal inception of the program in August 1998, MDT sponsored three MAP representatives, and in July 1999, authorized one additional part-time and two full-time operators to join the program as MAP representatives. MDT reported that this was done in recognition of the impact of the program on bus operator absenteeism. The County Manager reduced the number of Agency-sponsored MAP representatives to one as a result of the July 2001 OIG Audit Report recommending the discontinuation of the program. However, in order to

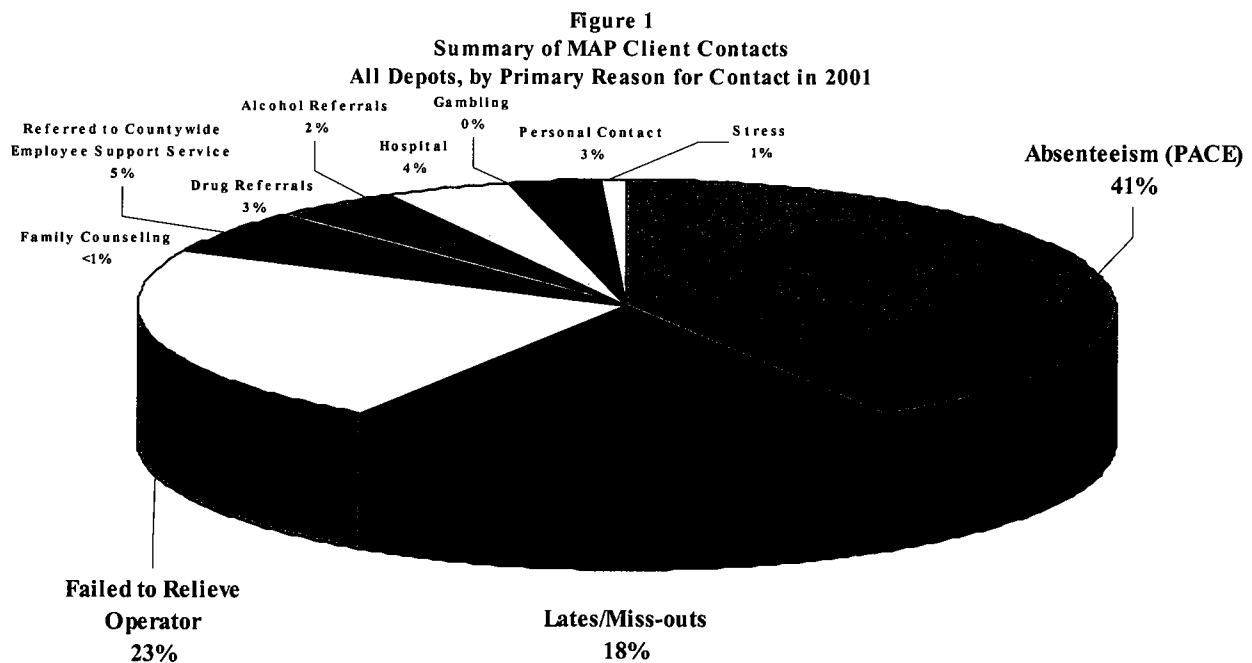
continue the program with three representatives, TWU assumed the support of two additional MAP representatives.

OPI found no written program guidelines or job descriptions for MAP representatives. No formal reporting procedure had been established, and MAP representatives did not report their activities to MDT. The bulk of the MAP's activity is driven by the daily bus operator absenteeism report generated by MDT. The following describes the typical daily routine for MAP representatives, based on OPI's interviews with the TWU president and one MAP representative:

1. Each morning, MAP representatives at the respective depots review the daily Absence Recap Report generated by MDT, make note of the operators who are absent and try to identify attendance trends among individual bus operators. The recap report lists the number of absence incidents for each operator within the past 12 months, along with the type of incident and an explanation for each absence.
2. The representatives also review the 12-month attendance history for bus operators who appear to be frequently absent and who may be close to disciplinary action under the PACE program. Representatives also identify operators who failed to relieve another operator who is at the end of his/her shift.
3. Using the findings from 1 and 2 above, the representatives make entries in their work logs if a meeting with a particular bus operator is warranted.
4. During the sessions with bus operators, the MAP representatives discuss attendance history and explore the reasons for absence offered by the operator, including any personal difficulties.
5. The representatives offer advice on how to overcome the root causes of absenteeism and reiterate the impact of absenteeism on other operators and the consequences of failure to improve, including discipline under PACE. The representatives offer additional help as warranted and periodically follow up with the operator.
6. The MAP representatives refer bus operators who require further assistance outside of the representatives' capability to appropriate entities. Operators may be referred to the County's Employee Support Services (ESS) program and/or to non-County community resources that offer a variety of services addressing physical, mental and emotional health care needs.
7. MAP representatives also provide bereavement support and support to employees' family members as needed.
8. In addition to initiating contact with bus operators with absence or tardiness problems, MAP representatives also accept self-referrals and referrals by colleagues or MDT management. Referred clients typically need assistance with difficulties such as poor job performance; addiction to alcohol, drugs or gambling; family problems or stress.

TWU indicated that MAP representatives are required to meet with operators at various times, including times outside of normal working hours, and in various locations on and off County property as convenient for the client.

It was not clear that MAP representatives regularly log and track the results of client contacts. However, in an effort to gauge their workload, in the absence of formal reports, OPI requested to review job logs. TWU and MAP maintain that work logs are confidential, and therefore, OPI requested representatives review their work logs and provide reports listing dates, reason for contact, follow-up activities and outcomes. Figure 1 below summarizes the workload as reported by three MAP representatives (one from each of the three bus depots) and a summary of the overall MAP workload. Together, the representatives contact an average of nine clients per day for all three depots combined.



Workload Summary for One MAP Representative in Each Bus Depot
2001^a

	Bus Depot			
	Central	Northeast	Coral Way	All Depots
Average Monthly Client Contacts	104.2	44	9.2	157.4
Average Daily Client Contacts	5.7	2.5	0.5	8.7

^a Data reported for varying periods at each depot and does not include the entire year. See Appendix C for details.

Source – MAP and MDT

The central depot has the highest number of daily contacts, as would be expected given that it is by far, the largest depot. The data also shows that MAP representatives following their review of the absenteeism report initiated 82% of client contacts based on problematic behavior such as

tardiness, failure to relieve other drivers and higher than desired absenteeism that could cause the operator to enter PACE. The remaining 18% of contacts were to assist employees with alcohol or drug abuse, gambling, serious illness, or stress related problems. The MAP representatives did not provide data regarding contact outcomes, total number of clients, or interrelationships among the various contacts relating to absenteeism reduction.

MAP staff informed OPI that most of the absenteeism-related client contacts are based on how close bus operators are to entering the PACE program. This is not surprising, as MAP activities primarily depend on the daily attendance report. The representatives attempt to affect operator behavior in order to improve attendance and prevent entry into PACE, since disciplinary consequences of PACE can rapidly escalate to termination. Inasmuch, MAP acts as an early peer intervention program and its objectives overlap those of PACE to a limited extent. However, PACE addresses absence without pay and sick leave only, whereas MAP also addresses additional issues relating to operator availability for work, such as lateness or failure to make a relief (accounting for approximately 41% of the MAP workload). Additionally, MAP addresses employee wellness issues including substance abuse and stress related issues.

Bus Operator Absenteeism (October 1997 through September 2001)

There are several systemic and operational conditions prevalent in the public transit industry that lead to bus operator absenteeism. Through discussions with MDT, TWU and MAP representatives and from research, OPI found that acute job-related stress and personal and family problems are major contributors to bus operator absenteeism. OPI also confirmed bus operator absenteeism is a problem for transit agencies nationwide, usually due to job-related stress, personal exposure to public violence, unruly passengers and scheduling demands in an industry where service must be provided on time on a precise schedule. Additionally, union seniority rules at MDT frequently limit the choices of junior operators regarding quality of routes and desired days off. Table 2 summarizes the main causes of MDT's bus operators absenteeism as compiled from interviews with MDT, MAP and from research conducted by the Federal Transit Agency.

Table 2
Issues Affecting Bus Operator Absenteeism at MDT

Operational Issues	Systemic Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased congestion makes it difficult to meet schedules• Routes not adequately adjusted for changing traffic patterns• Lack of time for meals and restroom breaks.• Lack of restroom facilities at turnaround points• Irrate passengers when operator is behind schedule• Unruly passengers• Security concerns on buses• Difficulty in maneuvering some buses on narrow streets• Fleet age and frequency of equipment failure• Uncomfortable operator cockpit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bus service must be provided at a specific time• Union seniority rules: Give junior operators limited choice of days off and junior operators are assigned the least desirable routes. These scheduling limitations encourage use of sick leave to handle personal needs• Growing percentage of bus operators are single mothers, who have difficulty obtaining consistent childcare – particularly at odd hours• Inadequate supervision and failure to discipline operators who perform poorly

Sources – MDT, MAP, and Federal Transit Administration

According to the daily absenteeism report prepared by MDT (Table 3), between FY97-98 and FY00-01 annual bus operator absenteeism declined 19.36%¹ from 20.87% to 16.83%, equivalent to 4.04 percentage points reduction in the absenteeism rate. Most notably, there was a 3.0 percentage point decline between FY97-98 and FY98-99. Thereafter, there were minimal declines in FY99-00 and FY-00-01. Given that the average daily number of bus operators scheduled to work has increased since FY97-98, while the average number of daily absences has decreased, we can conclude that there was a real reduction in overall absenteeism rates.

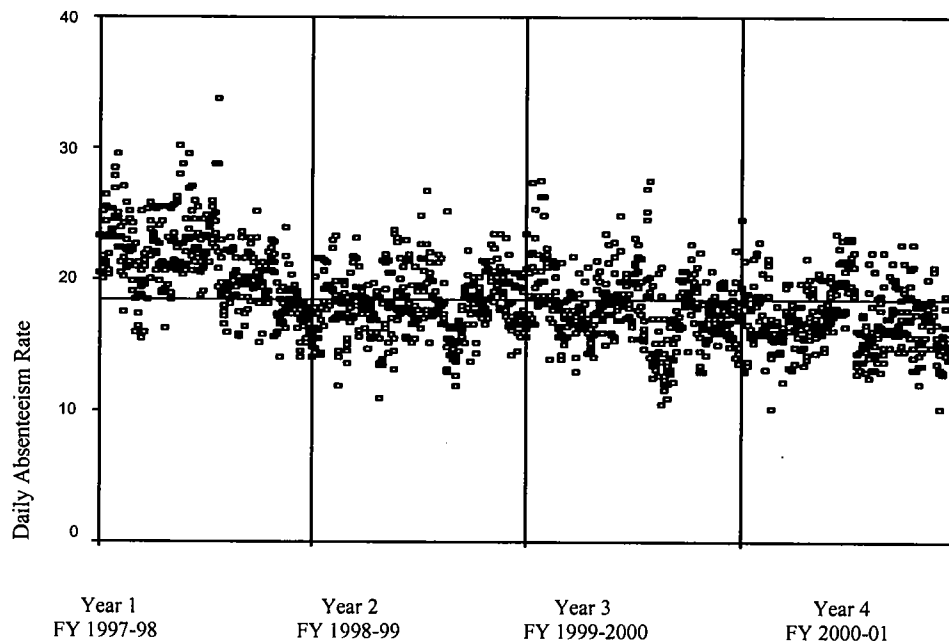
Table 3
Annual Bus Operator Absenteeism

Fiscal Year	Monthly Avg. # of Bus Operators (FTE)	Daily Avg. # of Operators Scheduled to Work and % Change over FY97-98		Daily Avg. # of Absences and % Change Over FY97-98		Absenteeism Rate
97-98	1,140	717		150	N/A	20.87%
98-99	1,127	773	+7.9%	138	-7.6%	17.88%
99-00	1,122	762	+6.3%	134	-10.5%	17.56%
00-01	1,132	761	+6.2%	128	-14.4%	16.83%

Source – MDT

Figure 2 below, shows a plot of daily bus operator absenteeism rates for October 1997 through September 2001 and indicates a significant decline in FY97-98 but with minimal change through FY01, see Appendix D.

Figure 2
Daily Absenteeism Rates
October 1, 1997 through September 30, 2001



Source - MDT

¹ The true reduction in actual absenteeism rate is (4.04/20.87) percent.

During the early stages of the August 1998 absenteeism reduction initiative, MDT experienced peak daily absenteeism of up to 34%, Appendix D, compared to highs of 25% in FY01. However, although there has been a reduction in absenteeism, MDT staff has informed OPI that the Department continues to budget for an average absenteeism rate of 18% because this also includes vacant budgeted positions. Additionally, daily absenteeism rates continued to fluctuate over 20%, which makes it difficult to justify a permanent reduction in the size of the Extra Board.

During FY 97-98, MDT grouped absenteeism in seven broad categories encompassing scheduled and unscheduled absences. In an effort to improve performance tracking, the Department expanded the list to include 19 categories as listed in Table 4 and Appendix E.

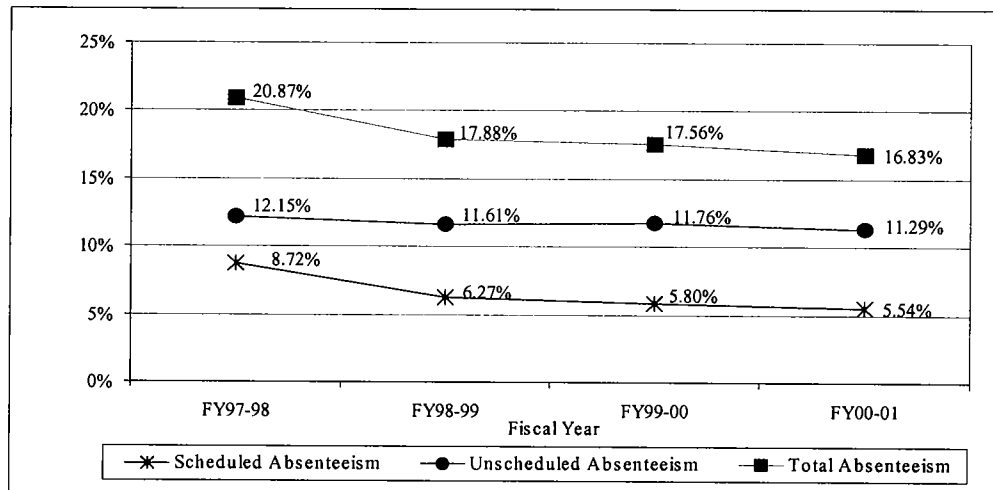
Table 4
Types of Absences Tracked by MDT

<u>Scheduled Absences</u>		<u>Unscheduled Absences</u>
1. Scheduled Vacation	2. MDT Business	3. Sick
4. Administrative Leave	5. Suspended	6. Banked Holiday
7. Military Leave	8. Relieved From Duty	9. Miss-out
10. Death in Family	11. On the Job Injury (OJI)	12. Superintendent's List/Sick
13. Special Duty	14. Transit Workers Union (TWU)	15. Superintendent's List/Other
16. Jury Duty	17. Leave of Absence (LOA)	18. Requested Annual
19. Training		

Source - MDT

While MDT distinguishes between scheduled and unscheduled absences, it was unclear what criteria were used to qualify absences in this manner. Nonetheless, analysis of the data proved instructive. Since FY97-98, unscheduled absences have generally accounted for more than 2/3 of all absences as detailed in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3
Scheduled and Unscheduled Bus Operator Absences (1997 –2001)



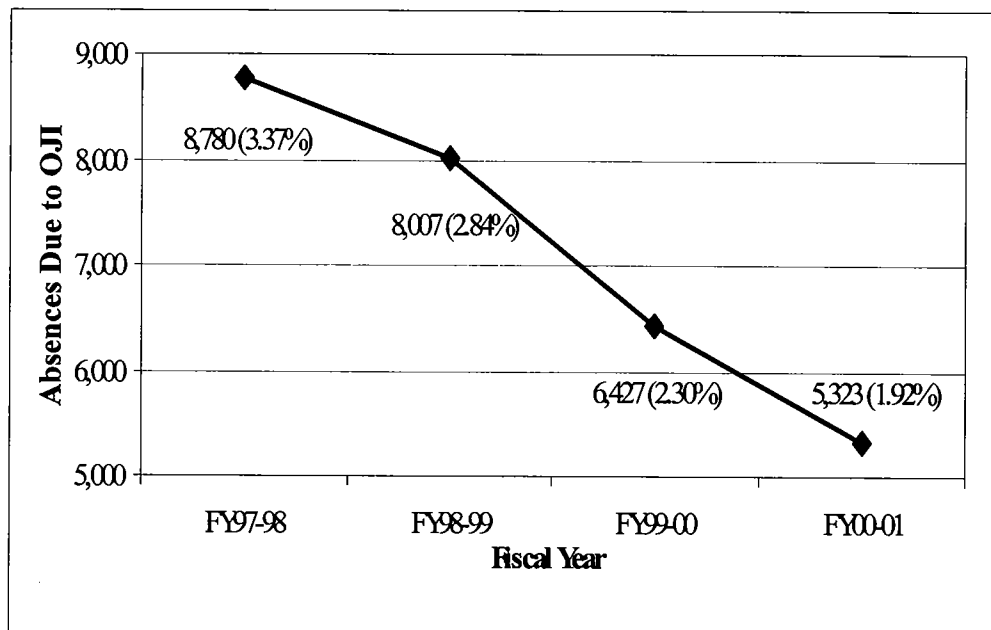
Average daily scheduled absences fell from 8.72% in FY97-98 to 6.27% in FY 98-99 and below 6% by FY 99-00. Average unscheduled absences did not change significantly from 12.15%.

As a result of the decline in absenteeism, OPI evaluated each of the 19 categories to determine their contribution, if any, to the reduction in absenteeism. The significant findings are summarized below and details of the analysis are included in Appendix F.

- **On-the-Job Injuries (OJI)**

Figure 4 shows that OJI declined from 8,780 absences in FY97-98 to 5,323 in FY00-01, representing the single largest contributor to the overall reduction in absenteeism.

Figure 4
OJI Absences Due & Related Percentage of Absenteeism

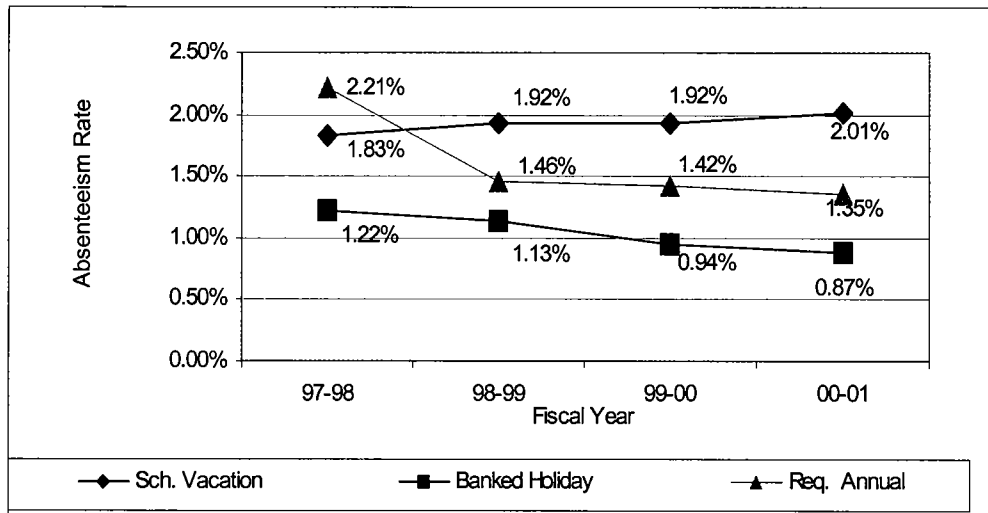


Of the 4.04 percentage point overall decline in absenteeism, OJI accounted for 1.45 points or more than 1/3 of the overall decline. MDT attributes this decline primarily to increased oversight of OJI claims since FY97-98, greater scrutiny by the Risk Management Division of General Services Administration, and efforts to get injured operators back to work. However, MAP representatives indicate they also play a part in addressing OJI issues. As reported by MAP, representatives periodically encourage bus operators with legitimate job-related injuries or chronic pain or illnesses to take OJI leave and seek professional assistance, rather than taking sporadic sick days off without treating the illness. Available data does not provide the ability to validate this statement.

- **Scheduled Vacation, Banked Holiday, and Requested Annual Leave**

Absences due to Banked Holiday and Requested Annual leave have also declined significantly as detailed in Figure 5. The reasons for this shift in requested annual leave and banked holidays are unclear. However, while absences due to Scheduled Vacation increased during the period it was partially offset by the cumulative reduction in Banked

Figure 5
Absenteeism From Scheduled Vacation, Banked Holidays and Requested Annual Leave

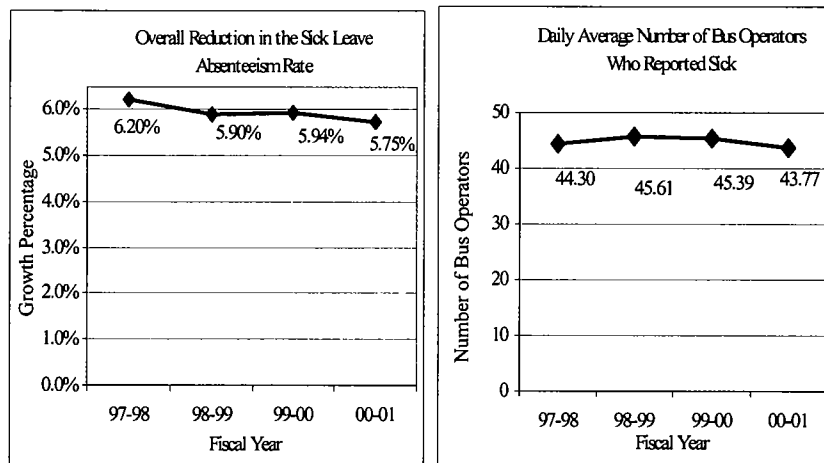


Holidays and Requested Annual Leave. It should be noted that the increase in staffing naturally increases Scheduled Annual Leave totals, however, the net contribution of these three categories to absenteeism reduction was 1.03 percentage points or $\frac{1}{4}$ of the overall 4.04% absenteeism reduction (see Category A in Appendix F).

- Sick Leave**

As shown in Figure 6, absences due to sick leave taken contributed 0.45 percentage points, or about 11%, of the 4.04-percentage point reduction between FY97-98 and FY00-01.

Figure 6
Reduction in Absenteeism Due to Sick Leave Since FY97-98



In FY97-98, overall absenteeism due to sick leave was 6.20%; by FY00-01, it fell to 5.75%. Despite the implied decline, the actual number of bus operators calling in sick each day has remained fairly steady, averaging between 43 and 46 bus operators per day since

FY97-98. This indicates that the implied percentage decline is primarily due to increased staffing levels.

Impact Of MDT's August 1998 5-Part Absenteeism Reduction Initiatives

In 1998, MDT and the TWU put in place several absenteeism reduction initiatives including increased management oversight of PACE, changes in workplace rules and the formal establishment of the MAP under the 1998 Letter of Understanding. The following describes the impact of these major initiatives on overall absenteeism reduction.

1. Positive Attendance Control and Evaluation Program (PACE)

MDT management reported that as recently as 1995, PACE was not vigorously enforced. However, since 1996 management has instructed supervisors to increase enforcement of the rules as part of the drive to improve attendance. Consequently, the number of PACE actions has increased sharply, as illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5
PACE Activity by Calendar Year Since 1995

PACE Action	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Informal Counseling	94	296	171	147	287	414	530
Formal Counseling	33	65	126	47	89	151	205
Written Reprimand	17	13	42	54	37	63	66
Suspension – 3 Days	1	3	9	4	15	21	12
Suspension – 7 Days				4	1	10	5
Suspension – 20 Days							3
Total	145	377	348	256	429	659	821

Source – MDT

The number of PACE actions has increased since 1995 from a low of 145 to a high of 821 in 2001. Increased vigilance also resulted in an increase in the number of more severe disciplinary actions taken by MDT and has been credited with reducing overall absenteeism, though it also resulted in an increase in the number of suspensions. The number of suspensions under the program rose from eight in 1998 to 31 in 2000 and reduced to 20 in 2001. However, based on the available data, OPI was unable to establish a direct correlation between increased disciplinary actions under PACE and declining absenteeism rates. For example, by 2001 PACE actions had increased 25% over 2000 levels and almost 220% over 1998 levels, but absenteeism rates did not fall proportionately, (refer to Figure 3 above).

2. Allowing for Bi-annual Physicals

Traditionally, annual physical examinations lasted two days and were required every year. Depending on the operator's work schedule, he/she was sometimes unavailable for work during those days. In order to increase operator availability for work, physicals are now scheduled every two years and were reduced from two days to one. MDT accounts for absences due to physicals within the broader category of MDT Business, consequently it was

not possible to determine exactly how many absences were avoided by implementing this policy change. OPI computed the maximum possible impact of this policy in increase operator availability as a proxy measure for its impact on absenteeism. The results are shown in Table 6 and indicate that the policy could have resulted in a maximum reduction of 0.76 percentage points in FY 00-01, or 1/5 of the 4.04 percentage point decline. It is expected that the impact of the policy change would remain static if staffing remains substantially unchanged.

Table 6 Allowing Bi-Annual Physicals Potential Effect on Overall Bus Operator Absenteeism				
	FY97-98*	FY98-99	FY99-00	FY00-01
Absenteeism Rate	20.87%	17.88%	17.56%	16.83%
Physicals Completed	859	183	599	405
Annual Number of Bus Operators Scheduled to Work	260,770	282,111	278,911	277,806
Absenteeism due to Physicals <i>Without</i> Policy Change	0.66%	0.82%	0.83%	0.84%
Absenteeism due to Physicals <i>After</i> Policy Change		0.06%	0.21%	0.15%
Maximum Potential Reduction		-0.76%	-0.62%	-0.69%

* Policy changed to 1-day *biannual* physicals and took effect on 8/5/98.

Source - MDTA

3. Use of Vacation Leave in Lieu of Suspensions

MDT allowed suspended employees to forgo leave time in lieu of having to serve a suspension. Bus operators electing to exercise the option cannot appeal the suspension. Between FY98-99 to FY00-01, the total number of bus operators serving a suspension increased from 243 to 750; however, only 22 bus operators exercised the option to forfeit vacation leave. Forty-nine days were used in FY99-00 and 89 days were used in FY00-01, resulting in less than 0.2 percentage point contribution to absenteeism reduction. Consequently, the impact of this policy may be considered insignificant in reducing absenteeism.

4. Changing the Discipline Required for Miss-outs

A miss-out occurs when a bus operator fails to report for work at the scheduled time and place and does not report in person to a dispatcher within two hours of the report/relief time. Prior to August 1998, the discipline for such behavior was automatic suspension, but under the Letter of Understanding, the discipline was reduced to a written reprimand. Conceptually, by not suspending the operator, MDT and the TWU expected increased operator availability. However, OPI believes a relaxation of the miss-out policy creates additional incentives for operators to miss-out. Since there are offsetting effects of this policy change --reducing absences due to suspensions, while possibly increasing absences due to miss-outs -- it was not possible to quantify the net impact from the data provided by MDT. Table 7 shows that the number of miss-outs since FY98-99 increased from 392 to 680 in FY00-01. Actual miss-out data from FY97-98 was not available.

Table 7
Miss-outs since FY98-99

Fiscal Year	Number of Miss-outs
FY98-99	392
FY99-00	485
FY00-01	680

Source – MDT

5. Later Call-in Time to Clear the Sick List

Another element in the 1998 Letter of Understanding allows bus operators who are out on sick to inform their supervisors by 3:00 p.m. that they will report to work the next day. Previously, the deadline was 10:30 a.m., after which an otherwise healthy operator would have to miss an extra day of work. The new policy was expected to reduce the total absences due to illness by a day in some instances. MDT does not keep data in a format that allows OPI to evaluate the impact of this policy on overall absenteeism. However, as shown in Figure 6 above, there was no significant reduction in daily sick leave use between FY97-98 and FY00-01.

6. Member Assistance Program (MAP)

As previously indicated, MAP neither reports its workload or case outcome data to the County. MAP representatives keep informal job logs and the level of detail recorded for each contact is at the discretion of the representative. At the request of OPI, the TWU president requested representatives to manually compile daily performance from their activity logs. A summary of these reports is included in Figure 1. Further details are presented in Appendix C. From the data provided, in 2001, 82% of reported client contacts were predicated by absenteeism, tardiness, or failure to relieve other drivers from their shifts. The remaining 18% of contacts were to assist employees with alcohol or drug abuse, gambling, serious illness, or stress. However, the data does not show outcomes, repeat consultations, or any interrelationships between overlapping issues. For example, OPI could not determine if a client contact for absenteeism was also related to a drug problem. Due to confidentiality concerns, MAP representatives were reluctant to release client records for review and analysis. As a result, OPI was unable to establish any direct causal relationship between the MAP and absenteeism reduction.

As an alternative, OPI attempted to gauge the effectiveness of MAP by evaluating the overall change in absenteeism categories that MAP could possibly have impacted. Table 8 shows the average daily absences in each of the 19 categories in FY97-98 and FY00-01. The table also indicates whether MAP, MDT management, or both were likely to have affected the change. Note that prior to FY98-99 absences were recorded in only seven categories consequently, no valid comparison of individual categories can be made for the period prior for these categories. Total absences among bus operators fell from 173 incidents per day in FY97-98 to 128 by FY00-01. While it cannot be unequivocally concluded that MAP had a significant impact on absenteeism rates, the data does not support rejecting MAP as a factor impacting absenteeism reduction.

Table 8
Potential Impact of MAP on Daily Absenteeism
FY97-98 through FY00-01

Category	Potentially Impacted by		Average Number of Daily Absences	
	MDT	MAP	FY97-98	FY00-01
1 Scheduled Vacation	✓		13.00	15.32
2 Admin Leave	✓		NR	0.35
3 Military Leave	✓		NR	0.81
4 Death in Family			NR	0.91
5 Special Duty	✓		3.00	0.41
6 Jury Duty	✓		NR	0.65
7 Training	✓		NR	0.90
8 MDT Business	✓		NR	1.33
9 Suspended	✓	✓	NR	2.05
10 Relieved from Duty	✓	✓	NR	3.22
11 On-the-Job Injury	✓	✓	24.00	14.58
12 Union Business (TWU)		✓	NR	1.12
13 Leave of Absence	✓	✓	NR	0.53
14 Sick	✓	✓	44.00	43.77
15 Banked Holiday	✓		NR	6.66
16 Miss-out	✓	✓	NR	1.86
17, 18 Supt List (Sick/Other)	✓	✓	50.00	23.31
19 Requested Annual Leave	✓		16.00	10.29
- Other (FY97-98 only)	✓	✓	23.00	Not applicable
Total			173.00	128.09

KEY: NR - Not recorded

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Since MDT and TWU Local 291 signed the Letter of Understanding on August 5, 1998, the annual absenteeism rate has declined from 20.87% in FY97-98 to 16.83% in FY00-01, for a total reduction of 4.04 percentage points, equivalent to a reduction of approximately 20%. This occurred in the face of a 6.2% increase in the number of bus operators scheduled to work each day. The decline in absenteeism was the result of a combination of management actions, increased discipline under the PACE program and the 5-part absenteeism reduction program. However, the majority of the absenteeism reduction was due to reduced on-the-job injury absences and the net reduction in vacations, requested annual leave, and banked holidays combined. These are categories in which MDT management will have greater influence than MAP.

OPI was unable to accurately quantify the individual impacts of some program elements, partially because of a lack of available data and the interrelationships among the program elements. This, combined with the fact that MDT has implemented various overlapping workplace policies aimed at improving attendance, makes it impossible to accurately isolate the impact of some program elements on bus operator absenteeism. For example, relaxing the discipline for miss-outs minimizes suspensions but also encourages an increase in miss-outs. Since FY98-99 miss-outs

increased from 392 to 680 in FY00-01 but suspensions also increased from 243 to 750 during the same period.

The available data does not clearly show that the MAP contributed *significantly* to the overall reduction in absenteeism. Additionally, the types of absences that could have been affected by the MAP could also have been affected by MDT management actions. However, it is possible that MAP activities impacted absenteeism by positively impacting the behavior of individual operators, particularly those whose absences were caused by personal difficulties or who were unaware of the disciplinary consequences of the PACE program.

MAP is limited in its ability to significantly reduce absenteeism because the broad operational and systemic issues driving much of bus operator absenteeism are outside of the control of the program. Even under the best circumstances, MAP representatives could not be expected to control hostile or violent rider behavior, length of runs, lack of rest facilities at turn-around points or workplace rules favoring senior drivers. While the MAP representatives can explain the disciplinary consequences of absenteeism and provide limited assistance to bus operators facing personal difficulties, its power to curtail absences is limited.

OPI conducted further research in other peer-to-peer programs and concluded that the structure, operations and objectives of the program may be limiting the effectiveness of MAP as a peer program. OPI reviewed programs at Florida Power and Light, Greyhound Bus, San Francisco Muni and New York City Transit among others. The conclusions are as follows:

1. Traditional peer assistance programs are structured to address comprehensive employee wellness issues, as opposed to targeting absenteeism reduction as the main mission.
2. Other peer assistance programs have clear program policies and formal data collection and reporting requirements.
3. Among peer assistance programs in transit agencies and other high stress and safety-sensitive industries contacted by OPI, the ratio of peer representatives to employees ranged from about 1:1,700 to 1:4,500. However, in determining an appropriate ratio, MDT should also consider the ethnic and gender diversity in the MDT community.
4. In most cases, more formal training and certification programs are offered to representatives, who are also required to work closely with the entity-wide employee assistance programs, in this case the County's Employee Support Services (ESS)

Finally, given the high levels of stress related to working in the transit industry, if the County determines that MAP is a desirable peer-to-peer program for MDT, it may be valuable for Miami-Dade County to support a structured program that focuses more broadly on overall employee well being and has an established formal working relationship with the ESS. Additionally, MAP should operate in accordance with the general principles of successful programs outlined in Appendix G. Such a program would also standardize record keeping, select appropriate performance measures to track, and prepare and issue regular reports.

Appendix A

**Letter of Understanding Between
The Transport Workers Union, Local 291, AFL-CIO
And Miami-Dade County**

AUG. 4. 1998 1:27PM

NO. 205 P. 1

**LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN
THE TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION, LOCAL 291, AFL-CIO
AND MIAMI-DADE COUNTY**

WHEREAS the Transport Workers Union, Local 291, hereinafter referred to as the Union, is the exclusive representative for transit operating bargaining unit employees;

WHEREAS Miami-Dade County, hereinafter referred to as the County, and the Union have negotiated this agreement in accordance with Article III.1, Labor-management Committee, concerning the development and implementation of an attendance improvement plan and other problems of mutual concern; and

WHEREAS the parties recognize that recurring and excessive absenteeism is disruptive to MDTA work schedules, detracts from service level, is costly, and both further recognize that employees are expected to be able and available for work when scheduled. An excess absentee is one whose attendance record reflects continuing chronic absences which hinder the regular operation of MDTA;

THEREFORE, in accordance with the authority contained in Article III.1, effective upon execution of this letter of understanding, the parties wish to amend and clarify the interpretation and application of the following terms and conditions of employment contained in the current collective bargaining agreement.

Article VI.3, (h) and Rail Addendum - Return to work after illness - All bus and train operators before returning to work following an illness, shall report no later than ~~10:30 A.M.~~ 3:00 P.M. on the day preceding the day they are able to return. Operators desiring to work off the A.M. extra list on a day following a sick day may do so if they call in before 12 midnight and vacancies exist. However, they cannot be paid sick and work.

Article VI.4 (b) A.M. Report Extra Board and Rail Addendum - The A.M. Report Board - The A.M. Report Board operators will be required to make two reports each operating day, at the A.M. time selected at line-up and at the P.M. time and place designated by the dispatcher. Seven A.M. shall be the latest report time for the A.M. Report Extra Board. The P.M. reports for the same day shall be posted at 8:30 A.M. that day. The A.M. reports for the next day shall be posted at ~~9:00~~ 5:00 P.M. It shall be the duty of all A.M. Report Extra Board operators to check each posting of their board for the next report.

Article VI.4 (m) And Rail Addendum - Extra Board Assignment - A.M. Report Board operators will pick report times. (Example: 3:55, 4:00, 4:01, 4:02,

etc.). Assignments: All "pieces of work" coming open by ~~10:30 A.M.~~ 3:00 P.M. the day prior to work day will be preassigned on a time out basis to A.M. Report Board Operators. Such preassignments shall be restricted to work whose report time is prior to next picked report and shall not exceed ten (10) platform hours in a spread time of fourteen (14) hours. A.M. Report Extra Board Operators making a second report will be assigned work on a time-in basis, and will be scheduled in the garage within fourteen (14) hours of their picked report. Spread time in excess of twelve (12) hours shall be paid at one and one-half times the hourly rate (Article VII.8 - Item 5). Any Extra Board Operator who is late will be assigned work after all other operators on the extra board have been assigned on the date he is late.

VI.3 (b) Miss Out and Rail Addendum - Any operator failing to make his/her relief or report at the scheduled time and place and failing thereafter to call the Dispatcher immediately or unless otherwise instructed, failing to report in person to the Dispatcher within two (2) hours of his relief or report time shall be deemed to have "missed out" and may be suspended from his assignment for the following day. will be given a written reprimand, however, excessive miss outs may result in more severe disciplinary action.

Provided, however, that the Superintendent of the operator's division may waive the ~~one day suspension~~ written reprimand if in his judgment the operator's failure resulted from circumstances beyond the control of the operator.

Article III.13 Medical Examination - ~~Annual~~ Once every two years physical examinations shall be required for all Bus Operators and Train Operators.

Article III.6 Disciplinary Action - Paragraph (7) The department at its sole discretion, may offer to an employee with notice to the Union, the option of forfeiting accrued annual or holiday leave in lieu of serving a disciplinary suspension. Employees selecting this option, that is authorized and approved by the department, shall waive their right to any appeal action of the suspension. The documentation of the suspension will be a part of the employees' work records and remain in their personnel files.

Membership Assistance Program (MAP) - The department authorizes the release of three bargaining unit employees who are appointed by the Union to serve as MAP representatives. This authorization will continue as long as targeted reduced absenteeism rates are met and maintained, however one MAP representative shall remain. Additionally, the Union President shall be released with pay to assist with coordinating the absenteeism reduction program and administer the collective bargaining agreement.

The parties will cooperate in defending against any challenge to the terms of this agreement. Should any person not a party to this agreement file any lawsuit,

AUG. 4. 1998 1:25PM

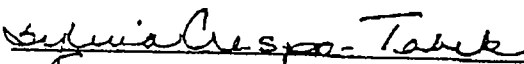
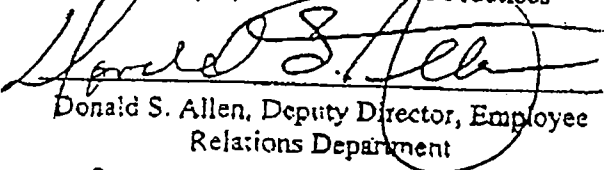
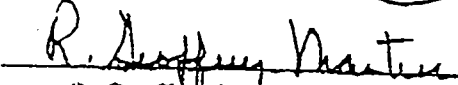
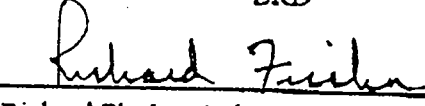
NO. 205 P. 3

grievance, arbitration or other proceeding to address issues in this agreement, the parties agree to provide testimony and other evidence in support of this agreement.


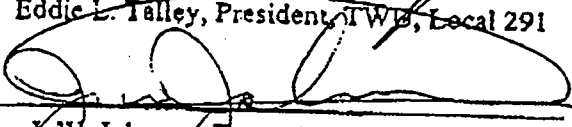


The parties have read the foregoing agreement and fully understand it.

Agreed to and signed this 5th day of August, 1998.

Miami-Dade County


for Danny Alvarez, Acting Director MDTA
Sylvia Crespo-Tabak, Chief, MDTA Office of
Fair Employment and Labor Practices
Donald S. Allen, Deputy Director, Employee
Relations Department
R. Geoffrey Martin, Director, Labor
Management & Employee Appeals Division,
ERD
Richard Fischer, Labor Relations Management
& Appeals Coordinator, ERD

Transport Workers Union, Local 291


Eddie L. Talley, President, TWU, Local 291
J. W. Johnson, Executive Vice President,
TWU, Local 291
Johnry Ellis, Secretary/Treasurer, TWU, Local
291
Virginia Joyce, Recording Secretary, TWU,
Local 291

Legend: underlined portions represent new language
strikethroughs represent deletions

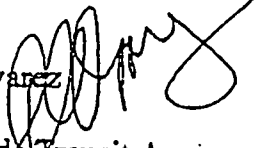
Appendix B

Absenteeism Improvement Plan, Memorandum Form MDT Director to the County Manager. August 12, 1998

MEMORANDUM

TO: M. R. Stierheim
County Manager

DATE: August 12, 1998

FROM: Danny Alvarez 
Director
Miami-Dade Transit Agency

SUBJECT: Absenteeism Improvement
Plan

Attached is a copy of the agreement reached with the Transport Workers Union, Local 291, to reduce and maintain the absenteeism rate among bus operators at no more than 16%. Maintenance at 16% will result in the parties meeting again to negotiate the specifics of a *gain sharing* program designed to reward employees who maintain a lower absenteeism rate. Since there is a savings of approximately \$500,000 with every one percent decrease in absenteeism, the targeted rate should result in nearly \$3,000,000 in savings.

For this program's purpose, an absence is defined as an operator's unavailability to work, regardless of reason, on what would otherwise be a regularly scheduled work day.

Highlights of the agreement are as follows:

- The deadline to notify management of a return to work following an illness was moved from 10:30 AM to 3:00 PM. This measure should give employees who feel better as the day progresses an opportunity to return to work earlier. Consequently, what might otherwise be a two-day absence has a greater probability of resulting in a one-day absence.
- Miss outs will no longer result in suspensions. Instead, if disciplinary action is appropriate, the violation will result in a written reprimand. When necessary, progression will be to dismissal.
- Physicals will be given every two years. This complies with state regulations and should result in savings for MDTA and the Employee Relations Department. The chief of MDTA's Human Resources Division is responsible for developing a program to insure that operators are scheduled as agreed.
- MDTA management will be directed to offer employees the option to forfeit annual or holiday leave in lieu of serving a suspension except when the violation is related to our drug use and alcohol abuse prevention program. Since the option of forfeiting time includes agreement not to appeal the action, there is the added opportunity to save the costs associated with that activity.

EXHIBIT

G-1

Miss Alvarez
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M. R. Stierheim
August 12, 1998
Page -2-

- MDTA will continue to allow three bargaining unit employees to function as Membership Assistance Program representatives. Their active involvement in assisting fellow bargaining unit members has already resulted in a noted reduction in absenteeism.

Efforts will be monitored regularly. The parties will meet to review and discuss findings on a monthly basis and a report will be forwarded to you on that same schedule.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to call on me.

Attachment

c: George Burgess, Director, Office of Management and Budget
Maria Casellas, Director, Employee Relations Department
Ed Talley, President, Transport Workers Union

6 FIG.

EXHIBIT

G-2

Appendix C

MAP Workload

Overview of Workload Data

MDT's MAP provided OPI with summary reports of program workload, compiled at OPI's request from representatives' personal logbooks. For each of MDT's three depots, the reports indicate the number of client contacts over varying time periods, according to the primary of reason for the contact. The contact types include:

- Absenteeism (PACE program)
- Tardiness or Miss-out
- Failure to Relieve Operator
- Family Counseling
- Alcohol Counseling
- Drug Counseling
- Gambling
- Hospital
- Stress
- Personal Contact
- Referral to Countywide Employee Support Service (ESS)

OPI used the data provided to determine the MAP's average daily workload at each depot, as well as the overall distribution of work by type of contact, Table 1 and Figure 1 attached.

The data did not indicate the length of time spent per contact, the total number of program clients, the contact initiator or referral source, or contact outcomes (except in the care of referral to ESS).

Impact of the Member Assistance Program (MAP) on Bus Operator Absenteeism

Table 1
MAP Workload Summary

NORTHEAST DEPOT (10 months data)	Jan-01	Feb-01	Mar-01	Apr-01	May-01	Jun-01	Jul-01	Aug-01	Sep-01	Oct-01	Totals	Annualized Totals	Average per Month
Absenteeism (PACE)	22	19	18	21	16	24	26	21	20	25	212	254.40	21.20
Lates/Miss-outs	12	3	5	7	4	7	6	2	8	9	63	75.60	6.30
Relief	3	4	1	4	3	8	9	3	7	9	51	61.20	5.10
Referred to ESS	3	3	2	4	3	6	4	2	9	7	43	51.60	4.30
Drug Referrals	0	0	2	2	3	2	0	1	0	0	10	12.00	1.00
Alcohol Referrals	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	7	8.40	0.70
Hospital/HV	1	0	1	1	3	0	0	1	0	0	7	8.40	0.70
Gambling	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1.20	0.10
Personal Contact	0	0	2	2	2	6	3	5	5	4	46	55.2	4.6
Total	41	30	40	48	39	53	48	37	49	51	436	523.2	43.6
Contacts per Day (average)													2.4

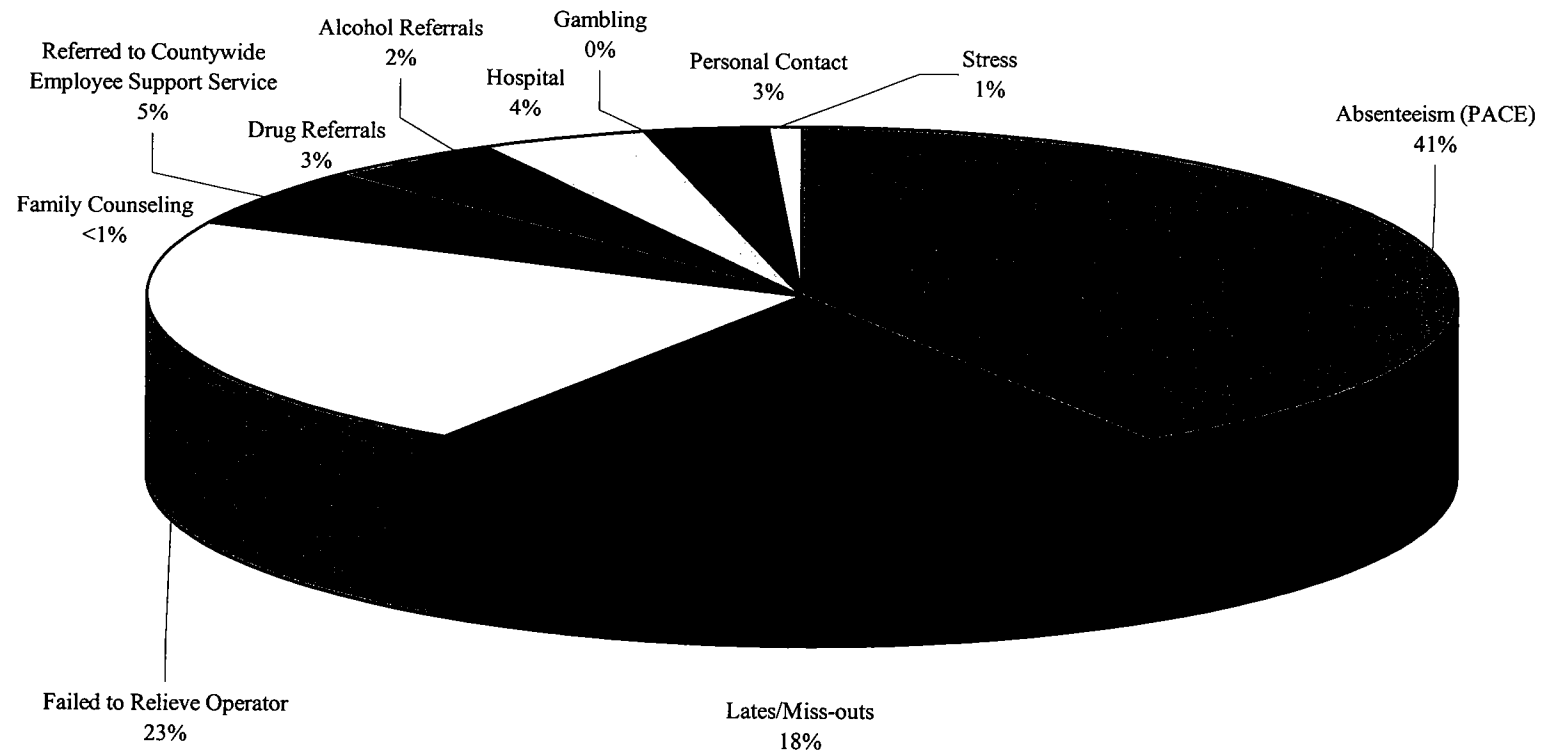
CORAL WAY DEPOT (9 months data)	January - March 2001	April - June 2001	July - September 2001	Totals	Annualized Totals	Average Monthly
Absenteeism (PACE)	10	10	15	35	46.67	3.89
Tardiness	7	7	7	21	28.00	2.33
Relief (P/S)	7	7	7	21	28.00	2.33
Family Counseling	1	1	1	3	4.00	0.33
Drug Counseling	1	1	1	3	4.00	0.33
Alcohol Counseling	0	0	0	0	-	-
Gambling	0	0	0	0	-	-
Total	26	26	31	83	110.67	9.22
Contacts Per Day (average)						0.5

CENTRAL DEPOT	Nov-00	Dec-00	Jan-01	Feb-01	Mar-01	Apr-01	May-01	Jun-01	Jul-01	Aug-01	Sep-01	Oct-01	Totals	Average Per Month
Absenteeism (PACE)	50	40	35	60	25	50	35	20	20	40	50	50	475	39.58
Lates/Miss-outs	25	15	15	35	15	10	15	15	10	12	36	36	239	19.92
Relief (S/P)	20	20	20	30	30	30	20	40	25	25	40	40	340	28.33
Referred to ESS	7	4	4	5	2	5	2	0	4	6	8	4	51	4.25
Drug Referrals	6	4	6	5	5	0	1	0	1	1	8	37	3.08	
Alcohol Referrals	4	2	3	2	1	2	2	1	0	2	3	0	22	1.83
Hospital	10	3	2	5	4	6	10	5	6	8	6	6	71	5.92
Stress	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	5	15	1.25
Total	122	88	85	142	82	103	85	81	66	94	161	141	1250	104.17
Contacts Per Day (average)														

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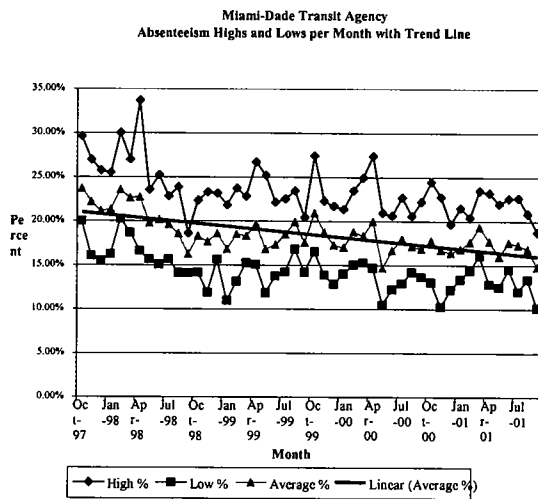
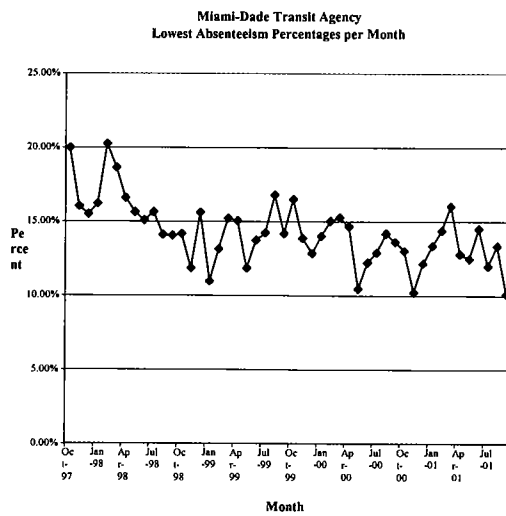
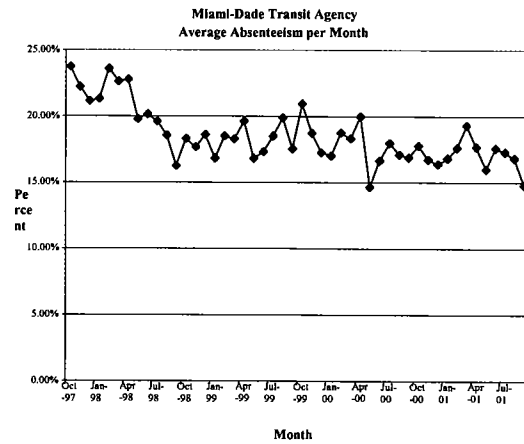
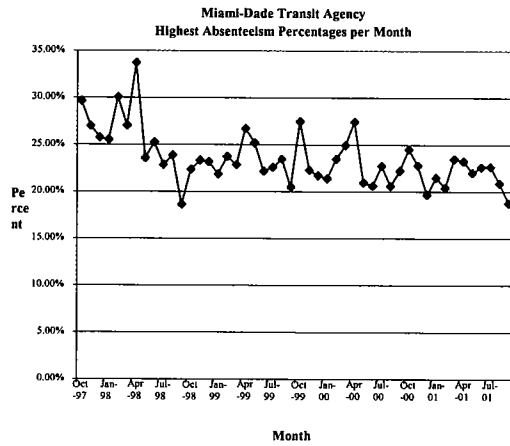
Data indicates workload for one MAP representative at each depot.
A year of 220 working days is assumed.

Figure 1
Summary of MAP Client Contacts, All Depots Combined



Appendix D Fluctuation in Bus Operator Absenteeism Rates 1997-2001

Charts respectively represent the highest, lowest, average and combined bus operator absenteeism rates for each month and fiscal year.



Appendix E

Definitions of Bus Operator Absenteeism Categories

Definitions of Bus Operator Absenteeism Categories

Scheduled Absences		
1	Requested Vacation	For MDT purposes, Requested Vacation is leave selected ahead of time during the last line up of the prior year, usually in November. Bus operators may request a change of picked vacations with the superintendent's permission.
2	Administrative Leave	Administrative Leave is paid leave authorized by the department director for purposes as defined in the Miami-Dade Leave Manual.
3	Military Leave	Miami-Dade County's Military Leave policy covers employees' salary for thirty days during a state of emergency or time of war, or to pay salaries for reservists on their two-week summer camp and their monthly weekend training meetings, up to 17 working days.
4	Death in Family	As defined in the Miami-Dade Leave Manual, bus operators can take three days leave with pay in the event of a death in their immediate family.
5	Special Duty	This covers operators working in an assignment other than as a bus operator.
6	Jury Duty	Bus operators can take time off with pay to serve on a jury.
7	Training	For scheduling purposes, bus operators getting paid in training and not operating buses are considered absent.
8	MDTA Business	This covers absences from operating a bus at MDTA's request for miscellaneous reasons. Some examples include appearing before the Board of County Commissioners for recognition, missing work due to a required physical, and appearing in court or other legal proceeding.
9	Suspended	MDT counts as absent bus operators who are not driving a bus because they are serving a suspension.
10	Relieved From Duty	Relieved from Duty Leave with pay is for bus operators under investigation by the MDT Director when it is determined to be in the best interest of the County that the employee should not be permitted to operate a bus.
11	On the Job Injury (OJI)	Bus operators who cannot perform their duties because they were injured on the job, cannot work under a physician order, and have also filed a Workers' Compensation claim, are considered absent.
12	Transit Workers Union (TWU)	Miami-Dade County provides paid and unpaid Union Activity Leave to authorized employees to participate in joint MDT-TWU activities.
13	Leave of Absence (LOA)	Leave of Absence is a director-approved absence without pay for a maximum period of one year.

Unscheduled Absences		
14	Sick	Bus operators who call in sick and fail to show to work are considered as absent. Once they are absent, they must call by 3:00 p.m. the day before they expect to return to work. Otherwise they will not be able to report to work the next day and will be counted as sick.
15	Banked Holiday	Bus operators working on a recognized holiday may bank that time for later use. However, supervisors (dispatchers and superintendents) can restrict actual usage of that saved time when manpower shortages are foreseen.
16	Miss-out	Miss-outs occur when a bus operator fails to make a report or relief at the scheduled time and place and does not report to the dispatcher within two hours of the scheduled report or relief time.
17	Superintendent's List/Sick	This covers sick-related absences that could last an extended period of time. In addition, bus operators on this list must obtain approval before returning to work.
18	Superintendent's List/Other	Bus operators on this list are not authorized to work without prior approval. Bus operators are placed on this list because of problems with their Commercial Driver's License (CDL), personal problems, a referral to the ESS, family leave or maternity problems, incarcerations or pending trials, pay issues, pending a return to work from an LOA, working in another division, refusing work assignments, and stress or other medical problems.
19	Requested Annual	Unlike Requested Vacation leave (see above) Requested Annual leave is not scheduled before hand. Bus operators with available annual leave may ask to use it with a superintendent's approval. An example would be a bus operator asking to take eight hours off the next day for personal reasons.

Appendix F

Change in Absenteeism Rates By Category

Change in Absenteeism Rates By Category

Overview of Data Charts and Absenteeism Data

The Office of Performance Improvement received data from MDT for FY97-98 through FY00-01 detailing bus operator scheduling and absence occurrences. This data were used to assess various trends that may have contributed to the 4.04 percentage point drop in annual absenteeism. The absenteeism data was received in two formats. The earliest data from FY97-98 had seven (7) categories of absences: Scheduled Vacation, Requested Annual, Special Duty, Sick Leave, On the Job Injury, Superintendent's Lists and Other. As noted by MDTA, the Other category contained thirteen categories of absenteeism including banked holidays, administrative leave, death in the family, military leave, jury duty, suspensions, training, other MDTA business that were not tracked individually. Data for the subsequent fiscal years included nineteen (19) categories: Scheduled Vacation, Requested Annual, Banked Holiday, Administrative Leave, Leave of Absence, Military Leave, Death in Family, Jury Duty, Special Duty, Sick Leave, On the Job Injury, Training, MDT Business, Union Business (TWU), Suspended, Relieved from Duty, Miss-out, Superintendent List Sick, and Superintendent List Other.

The data was adjusted to reflect the two formats for analytical purposes. Charts using the seven (7) original categories (FY97-98) categories were developed by using the following method: Scheduled Vacation, Requested Annual, Special Duty, Sick Leave, On the Job Injury, Superintendent's Lists and Other. Data for FY98-99 through FY00-01 were combined in the manner noted above.

Conversely, to establish a comparative 19-category format, the Other category (FY97-98) was divided into the missing thirteen categories according to a weighted totals. Table 1 shows a sample of the data normalization process. A similar method was also used to compute Superintendents Lists category for FY97-98 in order to normalize the Superintendents Lists-Sick and Superintendents List-Other as used in FY98-99 through FY00-01.

Table 1
Sample Data Normalization Process

Thirteen Categories Missing from FY97-98 Data

Banked Holiday, Administrative Leave, Leave of Absence, Military Leave, Death in Family, Jury Duty, Special Duty, Training, MDTA Business, Union Business (TWU), Suspended, Relieved from Duty, and Miss-out.

- 1.) Banked Holiday Instances for FY98-99 + FY99-00 + FY00-01 = Banked Holiday as a % of Other Category
Other (Equivalent for FY98-99 + FY99-00 +FY 00-01)
- 2.) Banked Holiday % of Other category x Other FY97-98 = # of Banked Holidays for FY97-98
- 3) # of Banked Holiday Instances for 97-98 x Scheduled to Work # for 97-98 = % of Banked Holidays for 97-98

Absenteeism Trends

Similar absence categories were grouped together to form larger categories for analytical purposes as follows:

- Category A – Scheduled Vacation, Banked Holiday, and Requested Annual leave
- Category B – Administrative Leave, Leave of Absence, Military Leave, Death in Family, and Jury Duty
- Category C - Special Duty, TWU, Training, and MDTA Business
- Category D - Suspended, Relieved from Duty, and Miss-out
- Category E - On the Job Injury
- Category F - Sick Leave
- Category G - Superintendent's List Sick and Superintendent's List Other*

Category A. Requested Annual fell 0.86% and Banked Holiday fell 0.35% while Scheduled Vacation increased 0.18%. The categories did not seem to be related in their movement over the years.

Category B. Absences in this category were not significant to the total absenteeism reduction because of the low number of instances. Between fiscal years 1997-1998 and 1998-1999, absenteeism in this category declines. Absences due to Administrative Leave rose 0.01% as did Leave of Absence. Jury Duty fell 0.04% , Military Leave, 0.02% and Death in the Family 0.03%.

Category C. Absences in this category were not significant to the total absenteeism reduction because of the low number of instances. However, absences due to Special Duty fell 0.33%, TWU Business accounted for 0.03% and Training for 0.01%.

Category D. All absenteeism types in this category increased over the period. Relieved from Duty rose 0.08%, Miss-outs were up .01% and Suspensions grew 0.07%.

Category E This category had the most significant percentage decrease over the period. On-the-Job Injury decreased by 1.45%. Likewise in

Category F. Sick Leave, decreased by .45%

Category G The Superintendent's List Sick and Other both moved in opposition. Superintendent's List Other fell 0.83% while Superintendent's List Sick grew 0.15%

Appendix G

Comparison of MDT's MAP with Successful Practices in Member Assistance

Comparison of MDT's MAP with Successful Practices in Member Assistance

Category	Successful Member Assistance Programs	MDT's MAP
Mission and Core Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop clear program mission focusing on employee wellness and root causes of employee performance problems • Strive to prevent workplace disruption before it occurs • Offer comprehensive intake, counseling and referral services • Undertake initiatives to address industry- or organization- specific employee wellness issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was specifically designed to combat bus operator absenteeism • Devotes significant time to operators already exhibiting disruptive workplace behavior • Spends a small portion of time providing intake, counseling and referral not directly related to absenteeism or tardiness • Has not undertaken systemic initiatives to address overall employee wellness issues
Organizational Structure & Program Sponsorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspire cooperation and mutual trust between labor and management • Allow management a role in staff selection and provide mechanisms for shared decision-making and oversight when management provides financial support • Size itself in accordance with program workload. Ratio of full-time MAP representatives to employees ranged from 1:1,700 to 1:4,500 among programs contacted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has not been characterized by high level of cooperation between TWU and MDT. MDT awareness of MAP mission and practices is limited • Does not provide for shared decision-making between TWU and MDT • May be overstaffed. Three full-time MAP representatives serve approximately 1,000 bus operators.
Program Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide proactive outreach to employees in the field, in addition to accepting self-referrals • Promote program services and cultivate a positive, approachable image. Maintain a visible presence in the workplace • Develop effective working relationships with providers in referral network, including management-sponsored Employee Assistance Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generates work by reviewing absence reports • Does not conduct outreach or awareness activities for employees • Does not extensively promote program services to workforce • Refers cases to County Employee Support Services when necessary; works with United Way

Category	Successful Member Assistance Programs	MDT's MAP
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop written job descriptions and required qualifications, and use competitive selection process to staff program • Select representatives with strong personal and professional commitment to the program • Engage in ongoing professional development, often including pursuit of the CEAP (Certified Employee Assistance Professional) credential • Are sometimes supervised by a mental health professional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not utilize formal selection process to choose representatives • Is staffed by individuals who appear to be committed to the program; however, level of commitment was difficult to assess due to OPI's limited contact with program staff • Receives periodic training from the South Florida AFL-CIO, the United Way, and The County's ESS. Staff was not familiar with the CEAP credential but interested in learning more. Difficult to assess the adequacy of staff training.
Ethical Standards and Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have clear policies on confidentiality that conform to all applicable laws and ethical standards • Require clients to sign consent form prior to opening case file • Clearly communicate rights and responsibilities of client and MAP staff • Develop code of ethics, or adhere to that of a credible professional organization • Establish mechanisms to track caseloads, client contacts and case outcomes, and report this data as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes measures to prevent the release of identifying information about its clients. Unclear whether the MAP has developed a formal policy on confidentiality, consent for treatment or release of information forms, code of ethics or statements of the rights and responsibilities of representatives and clients. • Records program activities in personal logbooks of representatives • Does not compile program utilization or case outcome data into reports, or share this information with MDT management